GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3177
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
ILLEGAL TELEPHONE EXCHANGES
Singh Shri Uday

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some illegal telephone exchanges are operating in several parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether some officials of VSNL and BSNL are reportedly involved in the running of such illegal telephone exchanges;

(d) if so, the facts thereof and the action taken by the Government against the officials found responsible for it; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to unearth the functioning of such illegal telephone exchanges?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Based on Sourced information, Vigilance Telecom Monitoring Units of Department of Telecommunications, along with security agencies have curbed around 291 illegal Telephone Exchanges in the country as soon as they have been detected.

(c) & (d) Yes, Sir. As per available records, no VSNL officer involvement has been found till date. In case of BSNL, at two places, officers have been found to have involved in illegal exchange case. The details are given below:

i) At Nagpur City: 5 Officers have been found and based on detention the officials have been suspended from service.

ii) At Cuttack: 5 Officials have been found to have involved in an illegal exchange set up for ISD call passing. They were punished by departmental proceedings. Out of these, three have appealed against the punishment and two have accepted the punishment.

(e) Preventive & Stringent action taken by Government:

All the High Tech Equipment used in the illegal setup is seized by the security agency and cases have been registered against the offenders. Further investigation in such cases is in progress.
Surveillance has been increased to detect the frauds by inspecting bulk booking of telephones and monitoring the calls traffic.
Department of Telecom has issued instructions/Guidelines to all service providers for effective monitoring, detection and prevention of such illegal set ups/frauds.
Training and presentations are being given to the senior Telecom Officers for better awareness regarding effective detection and prevention of such illegal set ups.
A close coordination between the service providers and investigating agencies is maintained to book the offenders.
The notional loss caused in such cases is also raised as penalty from the negligent service providers.
34 Vigilance and Telecom Monitoring Cell have been created by Department of Telecom (DoT) in all 24 Telecom Circles and 10 Metros in the country, for curbing such Illegal Telephone Exchanges.
Toll free public number 1800-110-420 have been opened, so that general public can help the department, in detection of such cases. Advertisement given in leading news papers and SMS's are sent by mobile operators to their customers, for creating awareness among public.